



# Making Tracks

**Editor:** Holly Berthold, *Metro Media Specialist*  
**Layout:** Denise Lehmann



# Making Tracks

Missouri Department of Conservation  
2360 Hwy D  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
[www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov)

# Forest Park Office

**5595 Grand Dr., St. Louis, MO 63112**  
For reservations call (314) 877-1309.

## 12

*Wednesday*

## Geocaching Basics

*10 a.m. – 11 a.m.*

(Ages 9 & up) Geocaching is a popular hobby sweeping the nation. Come learn the basics of this outdoor pastime, which combines scavenger hunts with hiking and GPS technology. GPS units will be provided. Dress for the weather. (Reservations begin April 3.)

# Sullivan Public Contact Office

**375 Highway 185 South, Sullivan, MO 63080**  
For reservations call (573) 468-3335 ext 227.

Caldwell Conservation Area – Washington, MO

## 21

*Friday*

## Night Hike

*7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.*

(Ages 7 & up) Sign up for this exclusive opportunity to explore the Caldwell Conservation Area in Franklin County. Take a guided hike along the Frog Hollow Trail and listen to the evening spring sounds. Stop along the trail to take pictures, identify animals and spend time at an area still in its primitive state. Bring a flashlight, camera and film, binoculars and bug spray. The trail is approximately ½ to ¾ mile long on uneven terrain – please, no sandals! Hikes last 30-40 minutes and begin at 7 p.m. Class size is limited to 50. (Reservations begin April 3.)

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# Making Tracks

## St. Louis Regional Calendar of Events

*April 2006* *Volume 06, Number 04*



# Frogs As Bioindicators

*By Eileen Diskin, Naturalist*

Year after year, the scientific community witnesses a remarkable increase in the amount of pollution resulting from Earth’s ever-increasing population. The effects of this rise in pollution on nature can be monitored through the use of certain organisms called *bioindicators*.

Bioindicators are plants or animals used to assess the health of ecosystems. Frogs are bioindicators that have received a lot of attention in recent years. The idea is that the abundance and condition of key species (such as frogs) in an ecosystem can be indicative of the health of the system as a whole; variations over time suggest that something within the system has changed. You may have heard that some frog populations have declined in recent years. Or maybe you’ve heard stories of deformed frogs—with extra or missing limbs, eyes and tails. Maybe you’ve even seen one yourself! There are a lot of guesses as to why this is happening; pollution is often suggested to be a likely cause.

Frogs make good bioindicators because of their high sensitivity to pollution. If you’ve ever touched a frog, you’ll know that it’s kind of slimy. This is one of their adaptations for aquatic life. Another is that their skin is *permeable*, which means that water can easily pass through it. This is important because any water going into the frog will carry with it any contaminants present in the water. Unfortunately, frogs don’t have the option of buying bottled water to fill their ponds with! So, you can probably imagine that a frog is in trouble if its pond is polluted. Because of their sensitivity, frogs are one of the first organisms to react to pollution, so deformed frogs may be a sign of worse things to come.

The next time you’re walking by a pond, take a few minutes to look for frogs. If you can get close, try to see if any are deformed. If so, you can contact the nearest Department of Conservation office. This will help us identify trends and patterns that can help determine what is causing the problem. Also, think about actions you can take to prevent this problem *before* it starts. There are precautions such as not dumping near bodies of water any waste substances (even from your garden) that could potentially harm aquatic species. In addition, if you own land with a body of water on it, be sure to surround it with plants to act as a *buffer zone*, which helps filter out pollutants.

Taking actions like these helps not only to ensure continued survival of frogs, but also the environment in which we live. For more information, visit our website at [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov).



2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From Hwy 40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 2 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/)

1 Wetlands for Kids

Saturday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
(All Ages) Learn all about wetlands and the critters that live there. Hands-on activity stations will help participants learn about wetlands. Stations include: Reptiles and Amphibians – touch snakes and frogs; Waterfowl – discover the ducks that live on our wetlands and try to identify them at the duck wing maze; Retrievers – watch these amazing dogs “retrieve” decoys; and much more! (No reservations required.)

11 Breakfast with the Birds

Tuesday 6 a.m. – 7:30 a.m.  
(Ages 13 & up) Join us for breakfast and a little birding. This course is designed for beginning birders who want to practice their observation skills. Please dress for the weather. *Naturalist: Shanna Raeker* (Reservations begin March 28.)

22 Basic Fishing

Saturday 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.  
(Ages 7 & up) Newcomers or those with limited experience are invited to learn the basics to get started in the wonderful world of fishing. Topics include fishing tackle, rods, reels, baits, casting techniques and types of fish. Then, put your new skills to the test and catch some fish. Fishing poles will be provided. Please note this program is intended for people with little or no experience in fishing. *Volunteer Naturalist: Al Newman* (Reservations begin April 7.)

22 Scout Discovery Table: Endangered Species

Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
(Scouts) We know that the passenger pigeon is extinct and the bald eagle is endangered, but what about the wolf, bison and barn owl? Discover which animals are extinct, endangered and rare. **Bears:** Sharing Your World with Wildlife Achievement #5e; **Brownies:** Eco-Explorer #5; **Juniors:** Wildlife #6. *Volunteer Naturalists: Kristen Schulte & Margaret Sutter McGregor* (No reservations required.)

22 Amphibian Night Hike

Saturday 7 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.  
(Adults) Witness a “marsh concert” presented by the toads and frogs of Missouri. Join us for an evening out on the levees at the Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area. We will learn to identify toads and frogs by their calls. Program includes a two-mile hike on gravel top levees to listen for amphibian calls coming from the marsh habitat. Please dress for the weather and bring a small flashlight. *Volunteer Naturalist: Marvin Staloch* (Reservations begin April 7.)

28 Arbor Day Celebration

Friday 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
(Ages 7 -12) Humans use trees in a lot of ways. How many can you name? Join us for this Arbor Day celebration! We will make crafts and a tasty treat to appreciate just a few of the many ways that we use trees. *Naturalist: Eileen Diskin* (Reservations begin April 14.)

29 Amphibian Night Hike

Saturday 7 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.  
(All Ages) Witness a “marsh concert” presented by the toads and frogs of Missouri. Join us for an evening out on the levees at the Marais Temps Clair Conservation Area. We will learn to identify toads and frogs by their calls. Program includes a two-mile hike on gravel top levees to listen for amphibian calls coming from the marsh habitat. Please dress for the weather and bring a small flashlight. *Volunteer Naturalist: Marvin Staloch* (Reservations begin April 14.)



Making Tracks  
St. Louis Region Newsletter

Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival

Saturday, April 29  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Columbia Bottom Conservation Area is excited to be part of the first annual Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival. The festival, which celebrates the Mississippi Flyway and the Confluence, highlights the significance of our area for both birds and birders alike.

As part of the festival, activities for all ages and birding expertise will be offered at Columbia Bottom Conservation Area. Novice birders will want to participate in a bird walk for beginners while experienced birders can wander on their own along the River’s Edge Trail. Both of these bird-watching activities begin at the Confluence. Activities related to identification of ducks, the importance of habitat for migration, crafts and more will take place at the Boat Ramp area.

The festival, which is based at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary near Alton, Ill., targets all levels of birding interests by offering educational activities, speakers, vendors and on-site tours. Other area sites will offer programs as well. Visit the Wings of Spring Confluence Birding Festival website at <http://www.wingsofspring.org> for more information. Prior registration is required for some birding trips. Please check the website for information.

So, join us before you “migrate” to the events at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Or, complete your journey here at Columbia Bottom Conservation Area. Either way, you’re guaranteed to feed your passion for birding!



# Rockwoods Reservation

**2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/)

## 14 Plant Presses: Discovering the Importance of Plants

*Friday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.*  
(All Ages) Pressing plants was important in discovering what vegetation existed in the West in the days of Lewis and Clark. It can be just as important to us in our own discovery of Missouri’s beautiful plants. Join us as we learn the importance of plants and how to properly preserve them. Each family will learn how to make a plant press, how to use it, and then take it home to start their own collection. Each family needs to bring two belts. *Naturalist: Anna-Lisa Tucker* (Reservations begin March 31.)

## 15 Scout Discovery Table: Bird ID & Flyways

*Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.*  
(Scouts) Learn to identify birds and discover the flyways they use during migration. **Wolves:** Birds Elective 13d; **Webelos:** Naturalist #3, #5; **Juniors:** Wildlife #3, #8. Also appropriate for Brownies. *Naturalists: Ed Leutwiler* (No reservations required.)

## 19 Toddling into Nature: Earth Day Celebration – Trees R Terrific

*Wednesday 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.*  
(Ages 3-6) What better way to celebrate the earth, than by learning about one of Missouri’s tallest natural resources – trees! Learn why we all need trees and how we use them in our everyday lives. We will read the Dr. Seuss story, *The Lorax*, then we will build our own mini forest! Please bring a 2-liter soda bottle. *Naturalist: Anna-Lisa Tucker* (Reservations begin April 5.)

## 22 Habitat Restoration Day!

*Saturday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.*  
(Ages 7 & up) For years, the staff and volunteers at Rockwoods Reservation have worked hard trying to improve the habitats found here for wildlife and plant diversity. As much as we have worked, we need more help! Certain plant species have choked out native vegetation, leaving areas where native plant and animal communities are in trouble. We need your help to stop these invasive species. Join us for our Habitat Restoration Day. This is an excellent project for Scouts, organized civic groups and families. After a couple of hours of work, we will head indoors to enjoy lunch. Each year, you will be able to return to Rockwoods Reservation and see the positive impact that you made in your community. Please bring gloves and dress for the weather. Reservations required. Groups may register for this program. (Reservation begin April 7.)

## 28 Missouri Sssssssnakes

*Friday 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.*  
(All Ages) Do you ever wonder how snakes slither? Or why snakes are always sticking their tongues out? Well, come join us as we learn the answers to these questions and more fun facts about these intriguing Missouri reptiles. *Naturalist: Angela East* (Reservations begin April 14.)

## 29 Bluebird Houses

*Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon*  
(Families) Learn about Missouri’s state bird and build a nesting box to take home (one per family). Please bring a hammer and a Phillips screwdriver. *Naturalist: Jim Westbury* (Reservations begin April 14.)

## 29 Nature Journaling

*Saturday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.*  
(Ages 10 & up) Expand your experience with nature by learning new observation and expression skills. Come with an appetite to indulge in nature’s bounty. Wear comfortable clothes for sitting outdoors. *Volunteer Naturalist: Karen Staloch* (Reservations begin April 14.)

# Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

**801 Strodtman Rd., St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday – Sunday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

For reservations call (314) 877-6014 Wednesday through Sunday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 east take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/)

## 5 River Ramble

*Wednesday 9 a.m. – Noon*  
(Adults) Calling all adult hikers, including those over age 60! Enjoy a leisurely hike and discover the unique wonders found at Columbia Bottom. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them. We will look for flowering trees, plants and birds along the way. This hike is part of our monthly program for adults. Meet at the Boat Dock at 9 a.m. *Volunteer Naturalist: David Petree* (Reservations begin March 22.)

## 7 Let’s Get Cooking! Junior Girl Scouts

*Friday 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.*  
(Junior Girl Scouts) Hey all you Junior Girl Scouts, let’s get cooking! Outdoor cooking, that is. Have fun around the campfire with a dinner and dessert recipe while learning how to build a fire. Bring warm clothes, water, a sit upon and songbook. Then, enjoy a meal as we listen for wildlife and sing songs. *Volunteer Naturalist: Lisa Reid* (Reservations begin March 24.)

## 8 Celebrate Missouri’s Arbor Day!

*Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon*  
(All Ages) You don’t have to be a “tree hugger” to embrace the wonders of Missouri’s trees. Visit Columbia Bottom for an overview of some Missouri trees, including the award winners. Find out why tree health is so important to our own well being and learn to care for the tree you’ll receive at the end of our program. This program includes classroom time and an outdoor walk. *Volunteer Naturalist: Denise Moorman* (Reservations begin March 25.)

## HOMESCHOOL 12 Lewis & Clark Survivors

*Wednesday 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.*  
(Families) Lewis & Clark faced many hardships and challenges on their journey up the Missouri River. Do you have what it takes to survive such a journey? It’ll take many skills including drawing a map, catching fish, hunting for food and communicating with the native people. *Naturalist Program Supervisor: Colleen Scott* (Reservations begin March 29.)

## 18 Babes in the Woods

*Tuesday 9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.*  
(Ages 0-3) Join us for a stroller walk and together we will explore our natural environment! This month we will look for our aquatic friends—wherever they may be hiding. Please dress for the mess! (Reservations begin April 4.)

## 20 HOMESCHOOL Career Critters

*Thursday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.*  
(Ages 7-14) What is an ecosystem? Who or what lives there? What is a niche? Do you have one? Discover the answers to these questions and more! Investigate and learn about some different ecosystems. See how plants and animals work together in their daily lives and how, sometimes, they are able to help an ecosystem recover from environmental problems. *Volunteer Naturalist: Pat Behle* (Reservations begin April 6.)

**11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 Nature Center hours are daily from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**  
For reservations call (314) 301-1500 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 east in Kirkwood, take Watson Road, exit and turn north on Geyer Road. Follow Geyer Road 200 yards to Cragwold Road. Go 1 mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/)

March 31

The Fishin’ Magicians

Friday7 p.m.

(Families) Catch the action with a show full of magic, humor, fishing and fun. The Fishin’ Magicians have entertained and educated outdoor enthusiasts from coast to coast. During the past five years, you may have seen them performing at many events for ESPN. Get ready for a wet and wild time! (Reservations begin March 15.)

1

Scout Discovery Table: Forest Trees

Saturday10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

(Scouts) Discover the wonders of Missouri forests while working on badge activities. Designed for Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts and Webelos. **Webelos** can complete Outdoor Group: Forester 3 and 4. **Brownies** can work on What’s Out There?: Plants 2 and 4. **Juniors** can work on Let’s Get Outdoors: Earth Connections 3, 4 and 8; Explore and Discover: Science Discovery 5. All are welcome and encouraged. Check it out! *Volunteer Naturalists: Ed Liesenfeld, Alma Dulz, & Cindy Taylor* (No reservations necessary.)

2

Canoeing for Beginners

Sunday1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 16 & up) This classroom situation will teach basic canoeing techniques, river navigation and courtesy. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom Bayer* (Reservations begin March 17.)

4

Canoeing for Beginners

Tuesday6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 16 & up) This classroom situation will demonstrate basic canoeing techniques, river navigation and courtesy. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom Bayer* (Reservations begin March 21.)

HOMESCHOOL

6

Spring Wildlife Hike

Thursday5:30 p.m.– 7 p.m.

(Ages 7 & up) April is a great time to find all kinds of wildlife working hard in the pleasant spring weather. In this program, we’ll take a hike on the Hickory Ridge Trail and try to find these animals that are taking advantage of spring’s offerings. Please bring binoculars and/or a camera if you have them. *Staff Naturalist: Kevin McCarthy* (Reservations begin March 23.)

7

Amphibian Night at Henges

Friday7:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.

(All Ages) Join us as MDC Herpetologist Jeff Briggler teaches about native amphibians and takes us on an exploratory hike. We will listen and record the frogs chorusing on the ponds of Forest 44. Learn to identify different species of frogs and their biology. This program will meet at Henges Range & Conservation Education Center. *Herpetologist: Jeff Briggler* (Reservations begin March 23.)

8

Walking Emmenegger

Saturday1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 7 & up) Join us for a walk around Emmenegger Park, enjoying the wildflowers and wildlife. Meet at the Emmenegger Bridge. *Volunteer Naturalists: Dick and Neva Wasson* (Reservations begin March 24.)

9

Second Sunday Celebration: Celebrate Wildflowers!

Sunday1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

(All Ages) Lots of fun for everyone! Wildflower walks and wildflower talks, wildflower stories, wildflower games. How many wildflowers can you name? Wildflower music with some pep to help put some “spring”-time in your step! One is when the fun begins. Bring your family! Bring your friends! Come early; stay late. There is always more to celebrate! Second Sundays we’ll be here, this month and on throughout the year. *Volunteer Naturalists* (No reservations necessary.)

13

Hiking at Powder Valley: Broken Ridge Trail

Thursday1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

(Adults) We will hike Broken Ridge Trail to see what birds, wildflowers and trees we can find. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom O’Gorman* (Reservations begin March 30.)

17

Hiking at Powder Valley: Hickory Ridge Trail

Monday1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

(Adults) We will hike Hickory Ridge Trail to see what birds, wildflowers and trees we may find. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom O’Gorman* (Reservations begin April 3.)

17

Turtle Troubles (at Henges)

Monday2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

(Ages 7-12) It’s a stump! It’s a rock! No, it’s a turtle crossing the road! Besides cars, turtles face many other hurdles throughout their lives. Learn all about these ancient shelled reptiles and their troubles as we take a close look at live animals and play an outdoor game. *Staff Naturalist: Amy Anderson* (Reservations begin April 3.)

19

Walking Emmenegger

Wednesday1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 7 & up) Join us for a walk around Emmenegger Park, enjoying the wildflowers and wildlife. Meet at the Emmenegger Bridge. *Volunteer Naturalists: Dick and Neva Wasson* (Reservations begin April 5.)

21

Creative Insect Photography: Photographing Insects and other Natural History Subjects

Friday7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

(All Ages) Dr. Tom Riley will show digitally projected images of many of his photographs, accompanied by a short and entertaining explanation of the subject. Dr. Riley will feature most of his photographs that will be on display at the Nature Center in the month-long exhibit. Dr. Riley will also explain how he arrived at the idea for the photograph and how he wanted the final image to look. He will talk about vision and the creative process used to make his photographs. Dr. Riley will also include discussion of the technical aspects of certain photographs. *Special Presenter: Dr. Tom Riley* (No reservations necessary.)

22

Photography Workshop by Dr. Tom Riley

Saturday10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 12 & up) Dr. Riley will review the techniques discussed in his presentation and will assist workshop participants become better nature photographers as the group explores the gardens and forest of Powder Valley. Participants will need to provide their own photography equipment. *Special Presenter: Dr. Tom Riley* (Reservations begin April 6.)

22-23

Show-Me Missouri Fish Mobile Aquarium

Saturday & Sunday10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

(All Ages) What is 40 feet long and holds, among other things, 3200 gallons of water? It’s the Show-Me Missouri Fish Mobile Aquarium at Powder Valley on Saturday, April 22, and Sunday, April 23. The aquarium is utilized for fishing demonstrations and aquatic education seminars and provides onlookers the opportunity to learn about Missouri’s fascinating aquatic life.

Up to 25 different species of Missouri’s native fish will be on display. Come and see some of the more popular sport and game fish along with fish rarely seen by most people. The fish swim among rocks, logs and plants that lend a natural setting to an already fascinating exhibit. Fisheries biologists and professional anglers demonstrate fishing tips and techniques from atop the mobile aquarium. They’ll discuss the ecology of fish and how seasonal behavior, distribution and habitats relate to recreational fishing.

Programs are 30 minutes in length and will be presented at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Between demonstrations, Missouri Department of Conservation personnel will be on hand to answer questions and provide literature as the fish continue to entertain, teaching young and old alike how aquatic creatures move and live in their natural environment. The mobile aquarium is an awe-inspiring exhibit that entices onlookers to go fishing! *MDC Staff & Volunteers* (No reservations necessary.)

24

Babes in the Woods

Monday10 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 0-3 ) Introduce nature to the very young using various senses on a stroller walk. *Volunteer Naturalist: Alma Dulz* (Reservations begin April 10.)

27

Hummdingers

Thursday10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

(Ages 3-6) Come learn about these “jewels of the garden.” We’ll discover some fascinating facts about these small wonders, and we’ll make a hummingbird feeder to take home. *Morning session led by Volunteer Naturalist: Janyce Beyer. Afternoon led by Staff Naturalist: Jada Barhorst* (Reservations begin April 13.)

April Hallway Exhibit Artists

Dr. Tom Riley

Artist and entomology professor at LSU Tom Riley was born and raised in Panama, Central America, where his parents worked for the Panama Canal Company. Surrounded by the lush tropical environment of Panama, he became fascinated by insects when he was very young, and has been fortunate to be able to pursue his interest in insect natural history, both professionally and personally, all of his life.

Tom is a self-taught photographer. His interest in photography grew from the photographs he made to illustrate the diversity of insect life to his students. Photography allows Tom to visually communicate his enthusiasm for insects and nature. By combining an artistic component into his photographs of insects and other natural history subjects, Tom hopes to broaden the appeal of nature and share his enthusiasm in way he hopes will inspire a greater appreciation for insects, their amazing beauty and diversity, and how closely their lives intertwine with the environment we all share.